United Nations A/50/PV.56

General Assembly
Fiftieth Session

Official Records

56th plenary meeting
Monday, 13 November 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral ..... (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 41 (*continued*)

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/332 and Corr. 1)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.19)

Mr. Ayalon (Israel): At the outset I wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the sympathy extended to us by the President, as well as by Member States, in the wake of last week's assassination of the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin. To everyone concerned we say: "The State of Israel is heartened by your words and your actions."

We are pleased to see that a growing number of States are recognizing the fundamental relationship between democracy, development, peace, security and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Democratization is not only a moral issue. It is tied directly to the establishment of peace and stability. The existence of a democratic government is the central guarantee for preventing policies of violence and aggression. This stems from its very nature, which places people's destinies in their own hands and is attentive to the people's yearnings for peace and prosperity.

Israel is still mourning the death of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, whose life was tragically cut short by an assassin's bullet. Sadly, political assassinations still occur. Assassination favours no specific system of government; bullets do not differentiate between democrats and dictators. Democracies, however, are best equipped to deal with such despicable acts. In States such as Israel, where the rule of democratic law is firmly entrenched and its values and traditions are enshrined, there is a smooth and orderly transition from one leader to another, even during times of acute emergencies and crises. My delegation is proud of the strength that Israeli democracy has exhibited through these difficult times. We remain committed to the pursuit of democracy and the peace process that our late Prime Minister championed.

The fact that a growing number of countries are embracing democratic principles is one of the most promising developments of our time. But we must not grow complacent. Democracies are still a minority among United Nations Member States, and the dangers they face from within and from without are still formidable. The process of democratization is a long one that must be nurtured and protected in order to bear fruit. It is dependent upon courageous leadership and the development of grass-roots support. Openness and

95-86618 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

participation by people from all walks of life encourage sustainable development. Democratic societies produce pluralistic, free market and enterprising economies. As a result, they enjoy the highest standard of living in the world.

For these reasons, it is appropriate for the United Nations to support the efforts of the Governments of the new or restored democracies. The international community should promote the development of democratic political cultures by instilling democratic values in the people, and especially in the young. Education for democracy should be a never ending process that encourages citizens to be informed and active participants in the noble task of government. This year experts from Israel held seminars on education for democratic elections in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Later this month Israel will be hosting a seminar on the role of labour unions in the transition to a free market economy. Next month another seminar to be held in Israel will deal with development and nurturing democracy through grass-roots organizations, with participants from 25 countries. For 1996 we are planning similar programmes for participants from all over the world.

Economic and humanitarian assistance is also crucial to buttress democratic reforms and to ensure the viability of young democratic institutions. We are certain that the report of the Secretary-General, submitted to the General Assembly at this fiftieth session, will be given the highest priority and attention.

In the past year alone we have contributed to several funds: those for victims of torture, for humanitarian causes in Rwanda and Yugoslavia, for the war crimes Tribunal in Abkhazia and for clearing minefields in Cambodia.

Our promotion of democracy is not limited to charitable contributions. Israel is pleased to have co-sponsored a number of resolutions in this session supporting democratization. We view this as an expression of the importance we attach to the issue, as well as a signal of our readiness to cooperate with the international community in providing assistance to new and restored democracies throughout the world. Accordingly, we endorse the Nicaraguan initiative, and co-sponsor this draft resolution to support new or restored democracies. We look forward to its adoption by consensus.

Mrs. Klein-Loemban Tobing (Suriname): The Republic of Suriname is, as it was last year, one of the sponsors of the draft resolution on support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies, which this year is contained in document A/50/L.19.

In the short history of Suriname as an independent nation, the democratic process has been interrupted at least twice. These interruptions have inflicted great pain and losses upon the Surinamese people. Having gone through difficult years, Suriname is now on the road, admittedly not an easy one, to establish a stable and fully fledged democracy.

While on this road the Surinamese people have experienced the value and impact of international solidarity. In organizing our renewed expressions of freedom and democracy, we have received inestimable encouragement and political support. Countries like my own, in which democracy was interrupted and now has been restored, should be supported. This support is critical in order to countervail the internal and external forces that endanger our emerging democracies.

The delegation of Suriname attaches great importance to the Managua Declaration and Plan of Action, as adopted by the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held from 4 to 6 July 1994 in Nicaragua.

The participants at that Conference agreed, within a true partnership of democratic nations, to exert themselves to the utmost to serve peace, democracy and security and to continue their efforts to create an environment in which the necessary democratic processes can be developed — an environment in which the United Nations Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development", as basic instruments for the consolidation of democracy, can be implemented.

My delegation supports the proposal to convene a Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, to be held in 1996 in Bucharest. It will provide us with an opportunity to evaluate the results of the implementation of the Managua Declaration and Plan of Action.

The great efforts of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to support and assist new and restored democracies have recently become evident in my country through the organization of a seminar on "Strengthening democracy". This seminar, held from 30 June to 2 July 1995, was organized by the National Assembly of Suriname, the Parliamentarians for Global

Action and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). About 90 representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, human rights, religious, youth and women's organizations, political parties, trade unions, educational institutions, the media, the police force of Suriname, private enterprises, and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) participated in the seminar.

During the seminar on "Strengthening democracy", the Surinamese people again stressed their firm belief in democracy and the democratic institutions as the only basis for progress, peace and social well-being. At the seminar, a resolution was adopted in which the participants ensure future cooperation towards: promoting equality between men and women through their equal participation at all levels of political and public life, combating legal inequalities and violence in the family, and striving for mutual respect among members of the family, using, among others, the standards laid down in pertinent international conventions and agreements; secondly, developing strong links between the democratic institutions of Suriname, the organizations that make up its civil society, and the international community; thirdly, increasing the socioeconomic development of Suriname, which is central to fostering a lasting democratic political culture in the country; and fourthly, fostering respect for the rule of law, the constitution and the democratic institutions and procedures that it establishes.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to thank the United Nations and its specialized organizations and agencies for the important contributions they have made towards the consolidation of democracy in Suriname. With the general elections — to be held next year — in sight, it will be of the utmost importance to have the continued attention and support of the international community, in order to consolidate the Surinamese democracy and its democratic institutions and so to protect and consolidate fundamental human rights and freedoms.

The Acting President: I should like to inform the Assembly that the representative of Yemen has asked to participate in the debate on this item.

Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed on Friday, 10 November, in the morning, may I ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of this delegation in the list of speakers?There is none. Yemen is therefore included in the list.

Mrs. Moutoussamy-Ashe (United States of America): The United States is pleased to address the issues raised under the agenda item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies". The Vienna World Conference on Human Rights recognized that

> "Democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives". (*A/CONF.157/23, para. 8*)

Bearing this in mind, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General on support for new or restored democracies. We have noted with interest and appreciation the section covering assistance the United Nations system is providing for institution-building, particularly in the areas of creating and strengthening democratic structures of government, enhancing the rule of law, and improving accountability, transparency and quality in public sector management. We strongly agree that the Secretariat and the United Nations agencies should increase cooperation in the area of institution-building and governance, in particular through strengthening capacity-building of democratic institutions.

The Secretary-General's report accurately states that the challenge of democratization in today's world cannot be met by the United Nations system or by Governments alone, although the latter remain the principal actors. Regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and trade unions, to name a few, share the responsibilities of building democratic societies. And around the world, it is ordinary citizens who are doing the hard, sometimes painful work of building democratic societies from the bottom up. They are making democracy work not just on election day, but every day. They are promoting civil societies that respect the rule of law and make Governments accountable.

Many young democracies contend with the vast problems of grinding poverty, illiteracy, rapid population growth, and malnutrition. The survival of these democracies may ultimately depend on their ability to show their citizens that democracy can deliver — that the difficult political and economic choices will pay off soon, and not just in some distant future. But nations that free human potential, that invest in human capital and defend human rights, have a better chance to develop and grow

As President Clinton has stated:

> "Democracies do not wage war against one another; they make better partners in trade and diplomacy; and, despite their inherent problems, they offer the best guarantee for the protection of human rights."

The United States welcomes the challenges raised in the Secretary-General's report on support for new and restored democracies, and we look forward to continuing to work with the United Nations and other international organizations to develop the public and private institutions essential to a working democracy and the rule of law.

Mr. Ziauddin (Bangladesh): Bangladesh was happy to participate in the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held in Managua from 4 to 6 July 1994, and was party to the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Conference. We therefore welcomed and endorsed the inscription on the agenda of the item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies". We also fully supported General Assembly resolution 49/30 of 7 December 1994.

It therefore goes without saying that my delegation strongly supports the continuing involvement of the United Nations system, and, indeed, the international community, individually and collectively, in supporting efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate democracy. In this regard, we take particular cognisance of the Secretary-General's caveat that the United Nations system

> "does not endorse or promote any specific form of government"

and that

> "Democracy is not a model to be copied from certain States, but a goal to be attained by all people and assimilated by all cultures." (*A/50/332, para. 5*)

He goes on to refer to democratization as:

> "a process by which an authoritarian society becomes increasingly participatory through such mechanisms as periodic elections to representative bodies, the accountability of public officials, a transparent public administration, an independent judiciary and a free press. It is inherent in this concept that democratization does not necessarily lead immediately to a fully democratic society. That goal may be attained only in steps, with an authoritarian society gradually becoming less so." (*A/50/332, para. 6*)

We fully agree with this view.

A factor of pre-eminent importance that Bangladesh would like to stress is that democracy is not only a sustained process, but provides the only long-term and sustainable route to successful development. Democracy and development are integrally interlinked. Just as nations have a responsibility to promote better standards of living as the essential base for restoring democracy, so the international community must provide a more conducive external environment through trade, investment and the transfer of technology. Furthermore, Bangladesh fully supports as relevant the essential premise of the Managua Declaration that the democratic process and democratic progress in our countries should not occur in isolation, but must be provided with an avenue for continuous communication and contact.

We welcome the Secretary General's comprehensive report pursuant to resolution 49/30, which remains a useful compendium of actual and potential areas of support for the democratization process by the United Nations system. We have taken specific cognisance of his observation and recommendations relating to electoral assistance; the role of international observers; means of ensuring the durability of the democratization process; administrative aspects of governance; cooperation in institution-building and in such key areas of involvement as the strengthening of leadership skills and political institutions; support for effective judiciaries to guarantee the rule of law and protection of human rights; and the strengthening of linkages between government and civil society through non-governmental organizations, the media, local government and professional associations and through decentralization. Through support for democratic structures and forms of government and a smooth continuum from relief to sustainable development, secure and solid foundations for peace, democratization and development can be achieved. The entire process requires a multiplicity of partners working towards democratization.

We therefore support the draft resolution now before us and call on the Secretary-General to present a report to the General Assembly, at its next session, on the implementation of the present draft resolution, including ways and means to enable the Organization to respond effectively and in an integrated manner to requests from Member States for assistance in this field.

My delegation believes that in the wake of the important Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, scheduled to be held in Bucharest in 1996, and the General Assembly resolutions, the concerns of countries with new or restored democracies will be kept under scrutiny on a continuous basis.

Mr. Domingo (Philippines): The Philippines joins our brother delegations in supporting draft resolution A/50/L.19, which aims to move forward the initiative expressed in last year's consensus resolution 49/30. Like many other delegations, we also appreciate the Secretary General's report on United Nations efforts to assist, at the request of Member States, in their democratization. We believe, however, that there is a need to intensify and optimize United Nations efforts.

As noted both by the First International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which was held in Manila in 1988, and by the Second International Conference, held in Managua in 1994, many problems, both internal and external, assail new and restored democracies. The national euphoria resulting from the overthrow of a tyrannic dictatorship or from a deliberate choice, through legal processes, to change a form of government is, in most cases, as we have observed in the last few years, soon dissipated by a realization that making a democracy work is not as easy as proclaiming a democratic Government.

Internally, there are forces of the "left" and of the "right" which tend to destabilize Governments. Leftist forces seek to give more privileges, rights and benefits to masses of people who seem to be left behind — justly or unjustly — in the political, social and economic adjustment processes. Rightist forces suspect anarchy in adjustment processes and seek to strengthen unduly the powers of government in order to maintain order where national discipline seems lacking. In many instances, minorities within the body politic, encouraged by the prevailing spirit of democratization, strive for recognition of their identity at the expense of national unity and integrity.

Externally, new and restored democracies — often constrained by mistakes or by habits from a long heritage of State-controlled economies — find it difficult to compete with countries experienced in capitalistic free trade. Thus, there is a need for new and restored democracies to be helped, both by sympathetic and friendly countries that are aware of the difficulties they face and by international organizations, like the United Nations, which could assist technically and financially in helping democratizing States achieve stability and self-reliance.

Not far beyond the immediate adjustment needs of new and restored democracies is the need for development. The linkage of development with democracy should be obvious. Development fosters that domestic stability which is a *sine qua non* for democracy, as well as international peace and security - the requisite environment for the nurturing of democracy. It is thus important for the United Nations — an Organization committed to the

> "prevention and removal of threats to peace"

— to support the efforts of Governments to

> "promote and consolidate new or restored democracies"

United Nations support for democratic and democratizing Governments should be based on the faith of its founding fathers

> "in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small",

which are elements essential to a democracy.

I should like to reiterate what the Philippine delegation said last year on this point. United Nations support, to be effective and durable, should be based on serious study of the scope of support, of ways and means to achieve objectives, as well as of Organization-wide acceptance of the objectives and the means. What, in concrete terms, can the United Nations do? What, in concrete terms, can it not do or should it not do?

Thus, the Philippines sees the value of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution requesting the Secretary-General to submit a report to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly on innovative ways and means to enable the Organization, in support of the efforts of Governments, as requested by Member States, to respond effectively and in an integrated manner.

In order that the Secretary-General's study may be properly appreciated by the general membership of the United Nations, the General Assembly should include in the agenda of its fifty-first session an item entitled "Support by the United Nations system for the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

The Conference of New or Restored Democracies was first held in Manila in 1988, moved to Latin America in 1994 and will be held in Europe — in Bucharest — next year. The whole world is interested in, and concerned about, the aspirations to and problems of democratization. Many countries seek United Nations assistance for their efforts to practise democracy. We hope that the Secretary-General's report and its early discussion by the General Assembly will serve as an important input to the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies.

New and restored democracies are becoming a very relevant force in today's world. May they continue to grow and thrive in their democratic way of life, for the peace and security of the entire world.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation is particularly pleased to speak on this agenda item, concerning the support by the United Nations system for the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies.

As the Heads of State or Government declared at the latest Ibero-American Summit held in my country last month, democracy, respect for human rights and respect for the fundamental freedoms of the human person are essential values for our peoples. These three values, whose defence is of great importance to our country, are three central pillars of the modern State, necessarily affecting the prosperity and stability of our societies.

Democracy is undoubtedly the best system of government for proper channelling of the popular will. It produces Governments with a mandate — a mandate to whose fulfilment those Governments must be unshakeably committed. If they act honestly and effectively they are rewarded at the ballot box. The democratic process also makes it possible to correct abuses and to eliminate corruption or arbitrary action by the powerful, who are inexorably replaced when the people lose trust in them.

Latin America was plagued by totalitarian regimes for a number of decades. However, in recent years, in the new international situation, a growing number of countries have adopted and recognized democracy as the best system of government. There have been many elections in the region, producing general expressions of commitment to democracy and creating new areas of peace and dialogue, which are essential for development, something that is urgently needed in our countries.

In the framework of democracy and the freedom that it guarantees, initiative flourishes and political and economic freedom results in increased opportunities. This is not just a romantic idea; the practical lesson of history is that oppression and authoritarianism always come to an end by making insecure the very regimes that they support.

The modern concept of development is based on these freedoms, but also on the responsibilities of the State, representing society, which must guarantee respect for individual freedoms and must strengthen the system itself.

Respect for individual freedoms, human rights, freedom of expression, tolerance, respect for justice: these are all values that are established slowly — slowly by comparison with the speed with which totalitarian regimes usually seize their illegitimate power. Thus, countries that enjoy democracy today have an unavoidable duty to promote it where it does not exist and to renew their full support for the consolidation of transitional processes.

That is why my country is represented here today, just as it was in Managua last year at the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, speaking in support of this objective, which is a matter of priority for us. The United Nations, under its Charter, has a historic responsibility to help consolidate new democracies and prevent any return to anachronistic systems of oppression.

For these reasons, my country, with total conviction, has no hesitation in endorsing and co-sponsoring the draft resolution.

Mr. Pirozhkov (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): The process of moving towards a democratic society, engaged in by many States which have taken the road of renewal and progress, is gaining the recognition and support of the world community. We can say without exaggeration that this is a dominant trend in the development of world civilization on the eve of the third millennium, and there is no doubt that it will intensify in the twenty-first century.

In this year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the delegation of Ukraine reiterates the high value that it attaches to the Organization's multifaceted activities in the areas of peace-keeping and conflict-prevention, help for the poor and the unfortunate and

efforts to unite countries and peoples on the basis of the principles of democracy, justice and progress. Within these extensive activities, support for the initiatives of the International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies — the first of which was held in Manila in 1989, and the second in Managua in 1994 — constitutes a new and important trend.

We can observe with satisfaction that, for many new States that emerged at the end of the twentieth century, the Secretary-General's interesting and comprehensive report on this subject clarified mechanisms for the practical realization of the principles and strategy involved in the creation of a modern civil society. Moreover, the types of interaction between international organizations and national States in respect of democratic changes in individual States that are engulfed in civil war and have deeply rooted authoritarian traditions have become clearer. This aspect of the activities of the United Nations system requires special attention and demands respect for the peoples of the new States, where the democratic process is still very fragile and is only now being put on a solid foundation.

As a newly sovereign State, Ukraine is entirely at one with the new or restored democracies, which have actively declared their commitment to democratic choice and have broadened participation to large segments of their populations in the processes of social, political and economic change, through such mechanisms as nationwide elections to representative bodies, accountability of State officials, a transparent public administration, a reformed judiciary and a free press.

This multifaceted process of democratic transformation is taking place in full measure in our country too. This is confirmed by the fact that on 9 November 1995, in Strasbourg, Ukraine was solemnly admitted as a full-fledged member of the Council of Europe. It has acceded to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and is constantly occupied with developing a multi-party system, establishing free and independent mass media, consolidating democratic structures of government, and carrying out legal reform.

Our delegation would especially like to emphasize that inter-ethnic peace has been firmly established in sovereign Ukraine, and there are no ethnic conflicts. This undeniably shows that we are on the right lines in such an extremely important and delicate sphere as State policy on national groups.

We note that Ukraine has confidently embarked on the path of democratic transformation and will never voluntarily abandon it. Of course, there are still many obstacles and difficulties on this path that are typical for post-socialist countries with economies in transition, but for our country there is not — and cannot be — any other alternative to the establishment of an open civil society.

We pay tribute to the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies. At the same time, we place much hope in the United Nations system to establish constant

> "trusteeship over new States in the process of formation, in order to make the use of force inadmissible and ensure adherence to the established norms of international law" *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Plenary Meetings, 35th meeting, p. 6)*

as suggested by the President of Ukraine, Mr. L. D. Kuchma, at the Special Commemorative Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization.

The delegation of Ukraine fully agrees with the contents of the report by the Secretary-General on the support by the United Nations system for new and restored democracies, in particular the proposition that:

> "Without national and global confidence in the essential elements required for the development of a robust economy, democratization will be threatened". *(A/50/332, para. 112)*

In this connection, I would like to inform the General Assembly about a new programme of activities of the Government of Ukraine, adopted on 11 October 1995 by the Supreme Council, the highest legislative body. This programme is aimed primarily at achieving macroeconomic stabilization and halting the slump in production, which is the main source of growth in living standards for the population. Implementation of this programme will be accompanied by the adoption of a new Constitution, development of legislation, structural and industrial readjustment of the economy, consolidation of the financial and monetary system, retraining of public service personnel and a rise in business activity.

In the realization of these plans, we feel the understanding and support of the international financial organizations for the problems of Ukraine, and their

readiness to render assistance in overcoming the complex problems of the transitional period. Today Ukraine stands at the beginning of the road to transformational reforms, but we believe that it will not change direction and will become a full-fledged member of the community of democratic States.

In the countries with new or restored democracies, new negative problems are also appearing, whose solution reaches beyond the borders of those States. These are the problems of refugees and illegal migrants, organized crime and international terrorism, the transit of narcotic drugs and so on. As the democratic institutions of the new democracies are strengthened, as pointed out in document A/50/332, a reduction in the assistance and attention given to these States by the United Nations system can be foreseen. In this connection, in the opinion of the Ukrainian delegation, international cooperation between the United Nations and the new democracies should not die out, but, on the contrary, should be reinforced, bearing in mind that every positive process, unfortunately, also has negative consequences, which must be neutralized and eliminated; this can be achieved only through the united efforts of representatives of the world community.

The development and consolidation of new or restored democracies is a global problem for mankind, the solution of which, we hope, will occupy the place it deserves in United Nations activities in the twenty-first century.

The Ukrainian delegation supports the draft resolution introduced by the delegation of Nicaragua on this agenda item and requests that Ukraine be included in the list of co-sponsors of document A/50/L.19.

Mr. Sychou (Belarus) (*interpretation from Russian*): First of all, I should like to thank United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his informative and comprehensive report to the General Assembly on the forms and mechanisms of support by the United Nations system for new and restored democracies.

At this session, as it did last year, the Republic of Belarus has joined in co-sponsoring the draft resolution on this question. We consider that the process of creation and democratic development of States which have experienced totalitarianism in their history and then rejected it deserves full support and encouragement by the United Nations and by the world community as a whole. The fact that the United Nations is tackling this topic in its fiftieth anniversary year is the result of the radical changes that have occurred in the post-confrontational world and bears witness to the ability of the United Nations to react energetically to the new challenges of time.

The Republic of Belarus, which in March 1994 adopted a new Constitution focusing first and foremost on people and respect for their inalienable rights and freedoms, and which has elected the first President in its history, has embarked on democratic reforms. The experience of the early years of independence and progress on the road to reform unfortunately has shown that the processes of transformation of political and economic systems require large material and social resources, and do not always go forward painlessly.

In the case of Belarus, these processes have been burdened by the consequences of the erstwhile senseless arms race, which resulted in the accumulation on its territory of a considerable quantity of armaments which our State must today reduce in accordance with its international obligations. The solution of questions linked with the Chernobyl nuclear plant accident are a serious additional burden for the national economy. However, whatever the specific problems characteristic of each State experiencing a period of transition to a democratic form of social organization, one thing is beyond question: namely, that overcoming the obstacles standing in the way depends on the effectiveness of the interrelationship between democracy and development.

The Managua Declaration, adopted at the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in July 1994, reaffirms the proposition that:

> "Development, as one of the fundamental rights of all nations, promotes the full exercise of democracy". (*A/49/713, para. 6*)

At the same time, the stable development of new or restored democracies depends on the successful reform of its political and economic institutions, and we believe that the United Nations possibilities in that direction are far from having been exhausted.

In conclusion, I should like to confirm the attachment of the Government of Belarus to the principles of democracy, political pluralism and the protection of human rights, and to express the hope that the draft resolution on "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies" will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Laing (Belize): Democracy is often painful. When the old order changes, politicians in power, bureaucrats and others associated with them suffer. So do their domestic and foreign collaborators, since scholars, governmental colleagues, diplomats and others now have to develop new relationships, friendships and even loyalties.

Democracy, in the sense of the process of the exercise of the popular will, is often painful as well. On the one hand, the masses do not always use the best table manners in exercising their choice. On the other hand, the obvious choice of the people — the anointed — sometimes do not accept the popular will and do not serve.

When the people have spoken, their anointed representatives, once in office, often interpret their mandate in ways not acceptable to the people. The value system, concepts and laws of the new leaders might provoke a desire, or even a clamour, for that which was recently jettisoned.

However, centuries of accumulated history have taught us that the alternatives to democracy are no substitute for that fragile and often bitter plant. If pain accompanies the pleasure of democracy, this is merely a human reality. We must therefore express heartfelt praise to those nations Members of this Organization that, with little prior tutelage in or experience of democracy, have taken the giant step into that *terra incognita*.

All praise is due to the Secretary-General for the valuable efforts at undergirding democracy described in his report contained in document A/50/332. Praise is also due to the Commonwealth for similar efforts. We must also ensure that both organizations are provided with support, especially voluntary support, in the performance of their remarkable tasks.

The report discusses the task of promoting a democratic culture. In that connection, it stresses the importance of nurturing a climate for pluralistic political parties and movements. My delegation wishes to support the various suggestions, including the importance of establishing systems for appropriate training.

Regarding the report's discussion of the need for free and independent media, we are impressed with the efforts of the Department of Public Information (DPI) to support independent and pluralistic media in various regions. We wish to stress the importance of such media's being completely autonomous, if not autochthonous. This is particularly necessary in these days of globalism in the media, since global uniformity is, logically, anathema to true freedom, independence and democracy. We hope, too, that in its seminars, in the context of the political process, DPI stresses the importance of the media's renouncing the use and abuse of sound bites that distort and deceive.

As the report suggests, establishing an adequate political culture requires broad-based civic education. This could be aided by the sponsorship of study visits by politicians and others to appropriate countries with well-developed electoral systems. However, ways and means must also be found to inculcate in politicians, who often operate systems of spoils, the value of love, a word we do not often utter in this hallowed Hall.

One cannot express anything less than unstinting praise for the numerous actions of electoral assistance taken by the Organization, as described in the report. As with the similar actions which have been taken by the Commonwealth, one is bound to recall that a major ingredient of the venerable doctrine of self-determination is the human right to democracy. One may therefore legitimately ask whether or not there has developed a universal legal norm commanding broad-based democracy. Of course, any such universal requirement of democracy would have to be in line with the desiderata of decentralization and respect for and compliance with the traditional structures of authority in society, as discussed in the report. Likewise, the structures of government which, pursuant to that norm, must be built should indeed include the other human rights, as the report seems to indicate. However, we would remind representatives that such human rights should, in addition to civil and political rights, include cultural, economic and social rights.

Such a broad-based democracy must clearly incorporate a set of firm legal structures. But, as the report clearly indicates, those structures should not, willy-nilly, connote a

> "wholesale transfer of Western-based legislation" *(A/50/332, para. 103)*

After all, democracy, by definition, must have a variable content, for which the United Nations must provide appropriate and tailor-made assistance. Happily, the report identifies the importance of assistance through capacity-building, civil service reform and improving accountability, transparency and quality of public-sector management. In this connection, the baneful character of

corruption is stressed. My delegation urges that efforts to extirpate this scourge should be no less far-reaching than those directed at the evils of terrorism and narcotics. And they should reach, as far as is appropriate, into the private sector, which is increasingly a substitute for government.

That thought leads to consideration of the extent to which unmitigated globalism is consistent with democracy. Inasmuch as globalism connotes uninhibited concentration and monopolization of business organizations, production and markets, it must be asked whether it is compatible with the popularism inherent in democracy. My delegation hopes that this subject will be taken up by the Secretariat in its future work.

Finally, my delegation fully expects that, internationally, democracy will continue to be developed as a relevant and vibrant value and institution. As Belizean Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel recently remarked to the General Assembly, the unfinished business of this Organization is equality. My delegation believes that equality is a vital aspect of democracy which we must enshrine in such fields as the role of small States in the global system, the participation of women and the composition and structure of the Security Council.

Our thanks are due the Philippines and Nicaragua, which have kept before the General Assembly and the world this important subject of support for the new or restored democracies. However, as we have indicated, the subject needs to be extended to include all democracies.

Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian):* The movement of countries of new and renewed democracy was born very recently. Its history is not long, not as long as the history of democracies or the 50-year history of the United Nations, which emerged in response to the challenge posed to world society by totalitarianism.

Nevertheless, the movement has already passed two major milestones — the First and Second International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies, held in Manila and Managua, respectively — and we are gradually preparing the ideological foundations for cooperation between the States participants in the movement. The Managua Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted last year do indeed bode well for the future, and we hope that the next Conference, in Bucharest, will lead to an even greater understanding that the tasks to be carried out by States with different forms of democratic structures are common to all of us.

The ideas underlying the movement of countries with new or restored democracies cannot but be consonant with the ideals of the community of nations. Consolidation of democracy and political stability promote sustainable development and economic growth. As we see it, the value of democratization is primarily that, having become an integral part of the internal political processes, it provides a basis for reconciliation, tolerance, full application of, respect for and defence of human rights, and the development of social practices based on the peaceful search for constructive solutions.

At a time when democracies, proceeding from the pluralism of ideas and interests as expressed by parties, movements and ethnic, religious and language groups, are exerting efforts towards further development, people are learning tolerance and beginning to understand that potential differences are not grounds for crude force, terrorist acts or appeals to separatism; and at a time when ways of stabilizing internal situations are no longer the main concern of Governments, real preconditions begin to exist for sustained economic growth and social development geared to the individual.

In our view, awareness of the positive potential of these common ideas served as the basis for political consensus and the adoption last year of the resolution recognizing the importance of the Managua Declaration and the Plan of Action and requesting the Secretary-General to study the ways and mechanisms in which the United Nations system could support the efforts of the Governments of new and restored democracies. Today, relying on this important document, States can continue the dialogue on what must be done so that efforts by Governments to develop democracy not only enjoy the support of the United Nations system, but so that in fact the very focused activities of the world community itself can serve to promote and strengthen democratic structures in Member States.

We believe that putting the question this way could provide a powerful incentive to develop respect for human rights and the rule of law and legality and to put a brake on the danger of the disintegration of State structures or the emergence of internal conflicts. It is not necessary to mention the resources that are used by the United Nations system to deal with the consequences of internal conflict, but of course these United Nations efforts cannot in themselves and all at once fully heal the wounds inflicted on peoples by aggressive nationalism and contemporary manifestations of racism or religious intolerance. Massive flows of refugees from

places where the democratic institutions, because of their weakness have not been able to challenge conflicts about to erupt into political discussion and constructive solutions, are sad testimony to this.

The report of the Secretary-General highlights some aspects of the question of how to provide United Nations system support for the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies. Perhaps it is not altogether fortuitous that the main focus has been on assistance in holding elections. Democracy, as is well known, begins with the awareness of the right of everybody to participate in the government of his country either directly or through free'y elected representatives, and the Russian Federation, consistently following this difficult process of step-by-step constitutional reform, will gladly welcome international observers, including United Nations observers, for our elections in December.

But, in our view, no less important than the holding of elections are such activities of the United Nations as providing assistance to States in establishing free and independent mass- information media, promoting the establishment of educational systems in the area of human rights, establishing and strengthening democratic structures of administration, ensuring the supremacy of law, and so forth.

Recognizing that democracy and development are among the main foundations of international peace and security, the States participating in the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies agreed that strengthening democratic processes is a key element in consolidating peace and international security. Russia cannot but welcome this approach.

Mr. Jele (South Africa): My delegation considers that the agenda item before us represents one of the important aspects of the principles guiding this body.

Even as a young democracy, South Africa has already experienced many of the facets that the draft resolution and the Secretary-General's report address. Having experienced the destructive and anti-human force of apartheid, we owe it to ourselves and to humanity to order our affairs in such a manner that an effective and lasting blow is struck against any form of dictatorship.

We believe Member States must build on the cause, common to us all, that everywhere on the globe there is a process leading to the entrenchment of democratic systems of government. The ordinary people of the world must have the freedom to determine their destiny, unhindered by tyrants and dictators. However, we must guard against the tendency to project certain models of democracy as a universal panacea and role models for all Member States.

The role of the United Nations system to support efforts by Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies is a vital one for those States emerging into democracy. The United Nations has vast experience in this area and should support efforts towards good governance. In this context we welcome the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/50/332.

We in South Africa are engaged in the process of redefining ourselves in democratic terms. Our drive towards a democratic dispensation is motivated by the unshakeable belief that only democracy can and will satisfy the yearning of equality and freedom for all the people of South Africa, Black and White.

Our Government of National Unity is committed to a people-centred society of liberty. Far from using ethnic diversity to promote racial domination and tyranny, as witnessed in the dark days of apartheid, the new Government recognizes ethnic and cultural diversity as part of the rich tapestry of our country, a creative contribution to building a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa. We therefore consider it vital to build a future premised on fundamental human rights, and for the realization of this objective we pursue an approach that recognizes the indivisibility of rights and that perceives no difference between civil and political rights, on the one hand, and cultural, social and economic rights, on the other.

The new Parliament of South Africa now operates within the framework of a Constitution which is the supreme law of the country, and under which the independent Constitutional Court serves as an effective mechanism to ensure that Government actions are in line with our Bill of Human Rights.

The Secretary-General has touched on a number of key issues that are essential for the promotion and consolidation of democracy. A multiparty political system, free and independent media, the building of a political culture through civic education, regular elections, the creation and strengthening of democratic structures of government, and respect for the rule of law are some of the most important aspects. Just as important are government accountability and transparency.

The challenge to the United Nations is to answer the question: given our interdependence, what is it that we can and must do to ensure that democracy, peace and prosperity prevail everywhere?

My delegation believes that the elaboration of the new world order must of necessity centre on this Organization and that appropriate forums should be found in which we could all participate to help determine the shape of the new world. We believe, as our President has said, that the four elements that would need to be knit together in fashioning that new, universal reality are: democracy, peace, prosperity and interdependence.

As we continue to debate the reform of the United Nations, we believe that the Organization should once more turn its focused and sustained attention to the basics of everything that makes for a better world for all humanity. In this regard, the thought-provoking observations and recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report deserve our careful consideration.

We fully support the draft resolution before us and hope it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Alakwaa (Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): No one values the blessings of democracy more than those who have been deprived of it. We, in the Republic of Yemen, have included in the Constitution of the United Yemen a number of principal articles that guarantee democracy and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. We have not confined ourselves to legislating and laying down rules and regulations that do just that, but have gone beyond the theoretical framework into the field of genuine actual exercise of democracy. In the political arena in our country there are now more than 30 political parties and more than 100 newspapers and periodicals. The first parliamentary elections in United Yemen were organized on the 27th of April 1993, with the participation of all national forces without exception. In short, all segments of Yemeni society now have the right to participate in policy-formulation and in decision-making as well as in the actual implementation of such policies and decisions. The Government of United Yemen is now engaged in returning confiscated properties to their rightful owners and in compensating those who sustain a loss as a result of such return. It has also cancelled all restrictions on emigration. There is no citizen that is now deprived of the right to travel abroad.

While we agree with the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/50/332, in particular with paragraphs 5 and 7 of its introduction, to the effect that democracy is not a model to be copied from certain States, and on the ways and means whereby assistance may be given in this regard, we believe that notwithstanding the existence of special circumstances and characteristics in certain societies, this should not prevent the establishment or restoration of democracy albeit gradually, until such circumstances and characteristics allow for the adoption of a genuine and developing democratic system that would be founded on the participation by all in action and in the business of Government.

We share the opinion voiced by the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua, namely that democracy is not an end in itself and that is not a cure-all for the ills of society. Yes, indeed, it is no panacea for all problems, but it does afford all social forces the opportunity of working together in seeking solutions to those problems. We value the assistance extended by the United Nations for the consolidation or restoration of democracy. Incidentally, preparations will be made shortly in the Republic of Yemen for the holding of the second parliamentary elections in the context of our abiding unity. We shall be grateful for any assistance that may be extended to us by this Organization, by any Member State or by non-governmental organizations in our forthcoming electoral process.

Finally, we support fully the draft resolution contained in document A/50/L.19, soon to be adopted by this Assembly.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on item 41.

I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/50/L.19 will be taken at a later date, to be announced.

Agenda item 47

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its 108th meeting, held on 18 September 1995, the General Assembly adopted decision 49/499, by which the Assembly decided

"that the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council should continue its work, taking into account, *inter alia*, the progress achieved during the forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions and the views expressed during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, including its Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and submit a report to the Assembly before the end of its fiftieth session, including any agreed recommendations".

In this connection, I should like to recall, for the attention of members, document A/49/965, which contains a letter dated 15 September 1995 from the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Thailand to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. The two Permanent Representatives, in their capacities as Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group during the forty-ninth session, forward to the Assembly in document A/49/965 the compendium of their observations and assessments, their discussion papers, and proposals and other documents presented to the Open-ended Working Group.

Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at noon.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: There are already 70 names on the list of speakers. I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to add their names to the list as soon as possible. In view of the long list, I should like to appeal to members to keep their statements to no more than 10 minutes, if possible.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Honduras is speaking in the debate on item 47 of the agenda, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", on behalf also of the Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

Central America welcomes and takes note of document A/49/965, which the General Assembly has before it today. We would like to thank the Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Thailand, for their dedicated efforts in preparing this document in their personal capacity.

Legitimacy and effectiveness are the two characteristics that must distinguish the Security Council of the United Nations before the international community. Two other goals sought by the Working Group are transparency and democracy in the work of the Council, the organ upon which the Charter has conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Making the Security Council into a more representative, credible and effective body with a more equitable composition is the general objective of the effort begun with the adoption, in this Hall, of resolutions 47/62 and 48/26.

Much was done to achieve these objectives during the forty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly. The dialogue in the Working Group made it possible to identify some points of agreement among Member States and to draw up a compendium of ideas and proposals, which will serve as an important basis for the negotiating stage to be undertaken by the Working Group. However, major differences remain that will require in-depth analysis by the Working Group.

Central America shares the view that the objective of increasing the membership of the Security Council is to enhance its legitimacy while maintaining its effectiveness. The increase will have to reflect the changes that have taken place on the international scene, including the substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations. The desire expressed by the Members of the United Nations to enhance the effectiveness of the Security Council will become reality if we make the Council as representative an organ as possible, reflecting the universal character of the United Nations and including within it the greatest possible variety of interests and views, and if we adopt, as guiding principles to that end, those of the sovereign equality of States and of equitable geographical distribution, as provided in the Charter.

Central America believes that the principle of democratization in international relations requires greater representativity in the organs of the United Nations. Only a Security Council with a broad membership based on the principle of equitable geographical representation can have the necessary legitimacy to act on behalf of all the Members of the United Nations, as it should pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter. Only a broad

membership can give the Security Council greater credibility, for its members will then be inclined to greater participation in the collective responsibility of the maintenance of international peace and security.

We recognize the importance for the composition of the Council of the participation, as permanent members, of those States that have global political and economic influence and the capacity to share in, and contribute financially to, the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. However, we would deem it unacceptable if, through the application of those criteria, only developed countries could be admitted to the category of permanent membership. That would be incompatible with the principles of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations and the democratization of international relations. We believe that, in order to arrive at a consensus in selecting new permanent members, we should include developing countries in that category, applying the same criteria as those set forth in the Charter for the election of non-permanent members. Ideally, the category of permanent membership would be eliminated gradually, because its creation was justified by past realities but is no longer appropriate in the new international context.

The Central American region strongly supports the idea of increasing the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council, in view of the need for equitable geographical representation. In this context, we believe that the various proposals submitted by the Member States deserve careful analysis. We are of the view that the countries of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia should have increased representation in the Council. The United Nations has grown considerably in the past 30 years. This justifies increasing the membership of the Council, mainly with developing countries — which constitute the majority of Member States — so that their interests can be duly represented, thereby preserving the pluralistic nature of the Council and democratizing its decision-taking processes. We believe also that the non-permanent members should have an opportunity to be re-elected alternately. To that end, Article 23, paragraph 2, of the Charter would have to be amended. This measure could help to improve representation in the Council.

The countries of Central America believe that the right of veto should be limited and ultimately abolished. The circumstances at the end of the Second World War that gave rise to the veto have changed and there is no longer any justification whatsoever for the veto. Central Americans feel that the right of veto should not be granted to any potential permanent members of the Security Council. Equal treatment for new and old permanent members is an unacceptable legal basis for granting it, also because the veto in itself is an anti-democratic practice and is contrary to the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Any reform of the Council will have to settle this issue with a view ultimately to abolishing the veto. To that end, we agree with the proposal to hold periodic reviews of the veto and other voting procedures.

With regard to other matters related to the Security Council, Central America is satisfied with the progress made towards increasing transparency and with regard to the Council's working methods. The measures already adopted, which simply reflect the discussions held in the Open-ended Working Group, are a significant contribution to increasing the Council's legitimacy and credibility. We believe that these measures should be institutionalized and reviewed periodically, and we agree that there should be more consultations between the Security Council and interested parties, regional arrangements and organizations and countries that contribute troops to peace-keeping operations. Similarly, we acknowledge that it is important for the Security Council to adopt specific measures to improve the working relationship with the General Assembly, with other United Nations bodies, and with States that are not members of the Council.

The Central American region feels that the results of the efforts made at the last two sessions by the Open-ended Working Group are highly significant and lay a firm foundation for beginning the Security Council reform process. We are sure that the various proposals made by Member States or groups of Member States are all useful and will help to expedite negotiations. As the Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group have recognized, much remains to be done before broad agreement is reached among all Member States, but to secure that agreement we should continue to give impetus to the activities of the Open-ended Working Group.

Finally, the Central American States share the view that Member States should take full advantage of the momentum generated by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations to use this fiftieth session of the General Assembly to work towards the substantial achievements we have set in motion.

We hope that the reform of the Security Council will be realistic and inspired by democratic principles and objective criteria so that all Members of the United

Nations, including small States, have the opportunity to participate in the Council and thereby to help it shoulder its tremendous responsibility.

Mr. Kamunanwire (Uganda): In the light of statements made during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, it had been the wish of most delegations that the settlement of the question of equitable representation on and an increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters would be one of the most important outcomes of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Unfortunately, this is not happening. Instead, differences and divergent views on the issue continue to make a breakthrough difficult.

My delegation, however, recognizes and commends the seriousness and serious efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the Chairman and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group on the matter. In particular, we pay special tribute to Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Nitya Pibulsonggram of Thailand for the achievements so far. In their report, the Vice-Chairmen conclude that there is general agreement on the expansion of the Security Council and on reviewing its working methods and other matters related to its functioning in a way that further strengthens its capacity and effectiveness, enhances its representative character and improves its working efficiency. This achievement should now enable us to resolutely narrow the crucial issues of how to expand the Council and review its working methods.

A number of proposals have been made on guiding principles for the democratization of the Security Council. The principle of equitable geographical distribution of permanent seats in the Security Council, reflecting the current expanded membership of the United Nations should be of the essence. Other considerations such as

> "the capacity to share global responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security" (*A/49/965, para. 6*)

should not demean another principle, that of political commitment by all Member States. Moreover, any attempt to give prominence only to the most powerful nations will serve to negate the principle of the equal sovereignty of all Member States. The position of Uganda is that Africa should be allocated permanent seats in the expanded Security Council proportional to the size of its membership in the United Nations.

Any genuine reform of the Security Council must address the question of the veto. Whatever categories and types of membership are finally agreed upon, all members of the Security Council should exercise equal powers. Either the veto power applies to all or it should be dispensed with. The argument that the veto power

> "had ensured the continued participation of the major Powers in the Organization" (*ibid., para. 13*)

sends messages of domination; and it not only undermines democratic principles but also contravenes the Charter principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States.

In its present form, the Security Council has initiated commendable measures and new practices aimed at improvements in transparency and working methods. This momentum should continue so that the measures taken and practices adopted reflect total transparency and clearly streamlined methods of work within the Council. In particular, there should be a mutual relationship between the Council and the other organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly.

In this respect, the General Assembly, as the supreme policy-making organ, should be constantly and fully informed on all issues and strategies of which the Council is seized, as the Assembly is the most representative forum, the body where all Member States have equal opportunity to express their concerns and interests with regard to various issues — including peace-keeping and international security — that affect the international community.

Further, with regard to the issue of Security Council consultations concerning peace-keeping operations, it is logical and important to include regional organizations and countries of the region concerned. These not only play a complementary role in preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping but also, and in particular, bear the brunt of the influx of those whom conflict has made refugees or displaced persons, as well as providing logistical bases for peace-keeping operations.

If my delegation is pressing for democratization of the Security Council and for strengthening of the General Assembly, it is because an inequitable United Nations will serve neither the ends of peace nor those of development.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): As I am speaking for the first time under your presidency, Sir, I should like to begin by recognizing the very important contribution that you, as the Permanent Representative of Thailand, have made to the work and activities of the United Nations, thanks to your experience, talent and impartiality.

We held the very first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Security Council on 19 January 1994. We have been discussing this question, at times very intensely, for almost two years.

We have, by and large, reached consensus on some essentials — namely, that the Council must operate with transparency, effectiveness and efficiency and must have better coordination with the General Assembly and with other United Nations bodies. But no progress whatsoever has been made on the essential issue of enlargement. Positions on this point have not become any closer; if anything, they are further apart and more entrenched than ever. Consequently, we missed the initial target: to agree on reform in time for the fiftieth anniversary. The only thing which we seem to have agreed on is that we are in profound disagreement on how to enlarge the Council.

The reasons behind this disagreement are very clear to the Italian delegation. We are confronted by two opposing visions of the future of our Organization. One is an approach that I do not hesitate to call elitist; the other is a democratic one.

Some Member States maintain that we should increase the number of permanent seats by two — a solution that has been dubbed "the quick fix". Even though this formula has apparently been abandoned by some of its initiators, others still seem to favour it. Reform of this type would not be evolution. Rather, it would be involution of the present system. The five current permanent members are all from the northern hemisphere, and almost all of them are fully industrialized, prosperous nations. Adding two more with the same profile, rather than correcting this imbalance, would clearly aggravate it.

A variation of this formula is the "2+3" proposal: two permanent seats for highly developed nations, and three permanent seats for the developing world — that is to say, one for Asia, one for Africa and one for Latin America.

Objections have been raised to this approach, for many reasons.

First, it would benefit only two or five Members of the United Nations, to the detriment of the remaining 175. The end result would be a small directorate of big countries, making critical decisions on questions that affect us all, but on which we would have no say. Furthermore, this formula would introduce the concept of elitism — of continental, hegemonic power — where it has so far been absent and where, I believe, it does not belong: in the world of non-aligned countries.

Secondly, this formula would double the number of Council members fully absolved from the need to stand for democratic election. And, to me, one thing is clear: if 10 members of the Security Council were never again — no more, for eternity — to have to pass the test of an election, the General Assembly's attempts at dialogue and interaction with such a Council would have almost nil results.

Thirdly, there are countries that contribute more to the United Nations budget than do some of the current permanent members. Others have larger populations or make more substantial contributions to United Nations activities. If they were shut out of permanent membership, they would inevitably compete for non-permanent seats much more frequently than they do now. This, in turn, would greatly diminish the election chances of other, medium-sized to small, countries in their respective geographic groups. Disharmony, resentment, even acrimony would prevail if the "quick fix" or the "2+3" formula were adopted.

Fourthly, since permanent members cannot be removed, except by their own agreement — a most unlikely occurrence — the new permanent members would, in principle, sit on the Council for eternity, impervious to changes in the world or in their own fortunes.

Fifthly, permanent members, as we all very well know, are assured a continuous presence in other important bodies of the United Nations system. If other permanent members were to be created, they would undoubtedly aspire to those same benefits, considering them an implicit and undeniable prerogative of their new status. This would risk creating a virtual monopoly of permanent members — old and new — over many bodies in the United Nations system, the so-called "cascade effect".

Last but not least, increasing the number of permanent members would double the number of vetoes

on the Security Council, and threaten to paralyse its activity. The veto, as has already been stated by the two previous speakers, is an institution whose time has come — during the cold war years — and gone. We should be focusing on how to limit its use, not on how to proliferate it.

The opposite vision of the future of our Organization is, instead, that of democracy, equitable geographical representation, and equitable rotation. We strongly believe that rotation is the key word for a truly democratic reform. Italy's proposal moves in this direction. Our project has undergone many changes since it was first presented at the beginning of last year. We have listened to criticism, and taken it into account.

What we are proposing is to leave the permanent members at five, and increase the Security Council by adding eight or 10 new non-permanent seats. According to this formula, the General Assembly would choose 24-30 countries to rotate in the additional non-permanent seats over a six-year period, with each country on the Council for two years and off for four years. Needless to say, those countries would be excluded from competing for the current non-permanent seats. The General Assembly should select those 24-30 countries on the basis of their contribution to the general aims of the Organization, particularly peace-keeping operations (troops, *matériel*, financing, humanitarian aid, etc.), and other criteria that could no doubt be identified by the General Assembly itself. But this group must not be fixed in perpetuity. Every 10-12 years there would be a review of the list, and those countries that had not honoured their greater responsibilities and commitments would be replaced by other members able and willing to meet them.

In our plan, the geographical distribution of the additional non-permanent seats should privilege the continents that are currently underrepresented. For example, if 10 new seats were added, five should go to Africa and Asia, two to the Latin American and Caribbean States, two to the Western European and Others Group, and one to Eastern Europe. In this way, 70 per cent of the additional non-permanent seats would be reserved for developing countries.

Critics of this formula have implied that it ultimately creates a third category of members. We do not believe that this is so. What we have in mind is not a third category but a system of rotation, as follows.

First, like all non-permanent members, the 24-30 countries would be subject to election by secret ballot — the very essence of democracy — and required to obtain a two-thirds majority.

Secondly, this would not be a closed rotation agreement, but an open one, which should be reviewed every 12-15 years. Nothing would prevent other interested countries from forming additional rotation agreements, some of which already exist — such as the one for Africa — although they are not always complied with.

Thirdly, it should be underlined that while more frequently rotating countries, if elected, would sit on the Security Council every six years, all others could, in theory, stand for election as often as every four years, in accordance with the present rules.

Finally, and most important of all, mid-sized and small States would have a concrete, realistic hope of being elected to the Council, since they would no longer have to compete for seats with their larger neighbours, who systematically elbow them out at every election. And those who have been here for a number of years know this only too well.

In fact, those who would benefit the most from our proposal would be the smaller and mid-sized States, 79 of which have been kept out of the Council so far, while 43 have served only once. In short, I believe we should work for reform that brings about the inclusion of all, and the exclusion of none.

One of the reasons most frequently cited for creating two new permanent members is that Germany and Japan represent the new reality of the past 30 years in the international community — the new global powers. With all due respect, I cannot share this view. These two global powers, along with others, have existed as global powers at least since the beginning of the century. The true new reality of the past 30 years is that 100 or so former colonies have become full-fledged sovereign countries. If they stand united, they are one of the main players at the United Nations.

> "Economic and social progress will not attain its full significance unless it is accompanied by an effort to democratize international life. In my view, democratization is an imperative, not only within States but also between States and in all the power centres of international society." (*SG/SM/5772*)

These are not my words, but those of Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, from his address to the Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Cartagena last October. It is our sincere hope that this spirit, the spirit of democracy among nations, may also prevail in these halls, for the sake of the future of our Organization and of the international community as a whole.

Mr. Jemat (Brunei Darussalam): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to the President, as well as to the two Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group, His Excellency Mr. Wilhelm Breitenstein and His Excellency Mr. Nitya Pibulsonggram, for the report (A/49/965) on this important subject, which we hope will take us a considerable step forward in seeing how the Security Council can be reformed and revitalized.

The authority and credibility of the Security Council, which, under the Charter, has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, have grown substantially in recent years. In this task, the Council must be strengthened and revitalized so that it can adapt to new realities. Majority views are now focused on the importance of ensuring that changes in the structure of this Organization should reflect the changes in the global political, economic and social landscape.

We therefore associate ourselves with the general support expressed by members of the Open-ended Working Group on the need to increase the membership of the Security Council and review its composition, particularly with regard to the addition of developing countries. While expanding membership to fill both permanent and non-permanent seats is important, we feel that the question of representation of interests, particularly for small countries and countries without regional representation, is even more important. My delegation would like to emphasize the importance of the composition of the Security Council reflecting clearly and equitably the geographical distribution and representation of United Nations membership. In this regard, we support the need for developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean to be represented both in permanent and in non-permanent seats of the Security Council.

Apart from the expansion of the Security Council's membership, serious consideration must also be given to the need to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's operations, particularly in its decision-making process. It is important for the Security Council to continue to maintain its transparency and openness in order to function efficiently and effectively. To this end, my delegation welcomes the briefings by the President of the Security Council to the non-members of the Council.

The Security Council has so far experienced both success and failure. In several cases, its resolutions have remained merely resolutions and failed to achieve their intended objectives. On others, imposed resolutions have tended to punish not only the guilty but also the innocent. For instance, the imposition of economic sanctions has had unintended victims, both in target countries and third countries. Adequate precautions must be taken in enforcing such resolutions, and a mechanism needs to be conceived to ensure that such actions punish the guilty but do not affect the lives of innocent civilians by depriving them of their basic needs.

Another concern of my delegation is the power of certain States to influence the decision of the majority when such decisions affect vital issues of international peace and security. My delegation is of the view that the current reform process should also address the need for a more balanced decision-making process that serves the interest of the majority.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's support for the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. We would also like to express our view that the reform of the Security Council should strengthen its effectiveness and its representative character, including equitable geographic representation for permanent and non-permanent members.

Mr. Catarino (Portugal): The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council has been under consideration by the Open-ended Working Group since it was established by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Much work has already been done in the Working Group over the last two years.

In fact, the working methods of the Security Council have improved considerably in the last two years, thanks largely to the Working Group's efforts for greater transparency in that organ *vis-à-vis* the general membership. Non-members of the Security Council are today far better informed with regard to the deliberations of the Council. They also have greater access to it and are able, directly or indirectly, through effective working machinery, of communicating their positions on matters of which the Council is seized.

However, now, in the fiftieth session, we are at a point where we must strive to move ahead significantly in the process of uniting our positions. We must all agree as soon as possible on what the Security Council should look like and how it should function in order to address most effectively the new challenges of international peace and security.

During both the general debate and the Special Commemorative Meeting, it was clear that many delegations concurred in recognizing the need to bring the Security Council into line with the new realities of international relations. Similarly, the report of the Open-ended Working Group states that

> "there was agreement to expand the Security Council and to review its working methods and other matters related to its functioning in a way that further strengthens its capacity and effectiveness, enhances its representative character and improves its working efficiency." *(A/49/47, para. 13)*

When the Open-ended Working Group reconvenes this coming January, the opportunity to strengthen the Security Council must not be lost. Many proposals have been forwarded, including a suggestion from Portugal. But the overriding importance of reaching an agreement on one comprehensive package for enhancing the effectiveness of the Council must be kept in mind. It will not be possible for every proposal to figure in the final package.

We must all, therefore, exhibit the necessary flexibility to meet each other on common ground, where the objective, surely shared by all, of an effective, representative and efficient Security Council can be reached. Bridges must be built and crossed so that the Working Group can pave the road towards a consensual solution agreeable to all. We believe that such a solution must benefit the membership as a whole, as well as each and every country, large or small.

At the end of this process of hard work, all Member States must feel that the enhanced Security Council is one that represents them, both individually and collectively, in carrying out the demanding but vital tasks required in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Londoño-Paredes (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Allow me to congratulate the President on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We are sure that under his leadership the Assembly will achieve its objectives.

It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the agenda item before us, the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", which was one of the crucial issues addressed at the Eleventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena last October. As a result of its deliberations, the Movement adopted common positions on the matter, which are included in the Final Document of the Cartagena Summit. The relevant paragraphs of that Document, in its draft form, stated the following:

> "The Heads of State or Government welcomed the ongoing endeavours aimed at reforming and improving certain structures and procedures of the United Nations as an essential component of strengthening multilateralism, with a view to ensuring equal participation, more balanced representation and better equilibrium, in keeping with the principles and objectives of the United Nations. In this context, they stressed the need to democratize the United Nations to better reflect the universal nature of the Organization and to fulfil the principle of sovereign equality of States. They underlined, in particular, the need for full democracy and transparency in the work of the Security Council, in view of its recent practices and performance. They expressed their determination to participate constructively in the process of revitalization and reform, in the firm conviction that the United Nations is an indispensable forum to be supported and strengthened. Yet democratization of the international political and economic institutions inherent in such a process continues to be hampered by those who seek to preserve their privileged position of power. In these endeavours, the main purpose should be to make the Organization more responsive to the changing realities and emerging challenges of peace and development in a dynamic context.
>
> "In view of the increasing trend on the part of some countries to exercise undue influence over the Security Council and the privileged and dominant role that the veto right ensures for the permanent members of the Council, which is contrary to the aim of democratizing the United Nations, they reiterated their position adopted at the Fifth, Sixth and Tenth Summits regarding the special privilege of permanent members of the Security Council to

exercise the veto and committed themselves to actively promote its curtailment, with a view to its elimination. Furthermore, while welcoming the actions taken by the Council with regard to its transparency and working methods, they considered them still insufficient and urged the General Assembly to recommend to the Council further measures to ensure its full democratization.

"They took note of the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, reflecting agreement to expand the Security Council and to review its working methods and other matters related to its functioning in order to strengthen its capacity and effectiveness and enhance its representative character. As important differences continue to exist, further in-depth consideration of these issues is required. They acknowledged that the non-aligned countries participated in the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group and expressed their determination that the Movement pursue the work of the Open-ended Working Group in a concerted and active manner.

"They reaffirmed that both the reform and the expansion aspects of the Security Council should be considered as integral parts of a common package, taking into account the principle of sovereign equality of States and equitable geographic distribution, as well as the need for transparency, accountability and democratization in the working methods and procedures of the Security Council, including its decision-making processes. They noted positively the proposal submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement to the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, encompassing the issues of membership, transparency and working methods of the Council. They emphasized that the proposal to expand the Council should be comprehensive in nature in order to improve its credibility and thus reflect the universal character of the world Organization. They considered it essential to substantially increase the proportion of members of the Council belonging to the Movement and to that end they urged that the non-aligned countries should work towards increasing the representation of developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean in the Security Council. Any attempt to exclude non-aligned countries from any expansion in the membership of the Security Council would be unacceptable to the Movement. They therefore agreed on the need for a coherent and coordinated approach by the members of the Movement.

"They stressed the importance of enhancing the effective functioning of the Security Council by adopting specific measures aimed at improving the working relationship of the Council with the General Assembly, other organs of the United Nations and non-members of the Security Council. They also underscored the need to operationalize Article 50 of the Charter, particularly by institutionalizing the consultations envisaged under this Article, as well as to adopt other effective measures to enable non-members to bring to the attention of the Council members their problems and difficulties, with a view to their solution.

"While recognizing the importance acquired by informal closed meetings of the members of the Council, they reaffirmed their conviction that those informal consultations must not replace the provisions enshrined in the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, nor restrict the necessary transparency in its work.

"In order to meet the objective of a restructuring of the United Nations that would achieve democratization, transparency and efficiency of the Security Council as well as better balance of functions between the principal organs of the United Nations, the Heads of State or Government examined various mechanisms, including the possible convening of the General Conference for the revision of the Charter foreseen in Article 109 of the Charter of the United Nations at an appropriate time."

Finally, my delegation would like to reiterate, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, that we will continue to work in the Open-ended Working Group in a constructive, concerted and active manner.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): I wish to thank the Chairman of the Working Group, Mr. Amara Essy, and the two Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Breitenstein of Finland and Mr. Pibulsonggram of Thailand, for their outstanding contributions to the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. I am confident that my colleagues join me in commending

them on a job well done in tackling the complex and highly sensitive tasks with which they have been entrusted.

I would also like to express my full confidence in the leadership of the new President of the General Assembly, Mr. Freitas do Amaral. There is no question in my mind that his wise guidance will significantly advance the debate on this issue of great importance during the Assembly's current session.

As we are all aware, a clear consensus exists among the Member States on the urgent need for reform of the structure and procedures of the Security Council. The broad participation in the Open-ended Working Group and the large number of delegations which touched upon this issue during both the general debate and the Special Commemorative Meeting this year attest to the high premium which Member States place on this issue.

We have now come to the end of another year of intensive discussions. This year's session of the Working Group has seen fruitful results, as we have been able thoroughly to assess the major issues, enrich the discussion further and, by so doing, identify some areas of convergence. Although consensus remains elusive on major issues, my delegation is encouraged that the Working Group is moving in the right direction.

This year's report, which was adopted in the Working Group and duly noted by the General Assembly on 18 September, illustrates that three broad categories of issues are currently under discussion in the Working Group. They are: first, how to restructure the Security Council to achieve better representation of the general membership; second, how and to what extent the Council can be democratized *vis-à-vis* its decision-making process, including the question of veto power; and lastly, how to improve the Council's working methods towards greater transparency.

The report also reveals that, despite wide gaps in the positions of delegations on most of the hard-core issues, there is some convergence of views. First, as the two Vice-Chairmen pointed out, there is clear agreement on the need to expand the Council to reflect increases in the membership of the United Nations to a total size within the range of the mid-to-low twenties. Secondly, although no delegation opposes an increase in the non-permanent membership of the Council, the question of increasing the permanent membership remains a point of controversy. Thirdly, with the exception of a few delegations, most Member States called for certain measures to restrict the exercise of veto power, including its scope of application. Finally, there was quasi-unanimity about the need to enhance the transparency of the working methods of the Council.

My delegation believes that the report and the compendium will facilitate our dialogue. As the papers contained in the compendium have provided valuable input in our past discussion, they should continue to serve as a basis for the future deliberations of the Working Group.

It is for this reason that the delegation of the Republic of Korea welcomes the decision of the General Assembly that the Working Group should continue its work during the fiftieth session and submit a further report before the end of the session.

At this time, my delegation would like to reiterate its basic position on the reform of the Security Council as follows.

First and foremost, we strongly believe that the final package of the reform should be based on consensus among Member States, in view of the profound impact that the package will have on the capacity of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole in the decades ahead. Any decision that lacks the general support of the Member States will hamper the viability of the United Nations.

Secondly, we believe that better representation strengthens the political and moral authority of the Council. It ensures more effective implementation of its decisions. It flows from this that the key element of reform is to bolster the Council's legitimacy. One of the best ways to achieve this objective is to make the Council more representative of the general membership, enhance democracy in its decision-making, and improve the transparency of its procedures.

Thirdly, on the issue relating to the expansion of the Council, a formula must be found which allows better participation in the Security Council of medium and small-sized Member States, which constitute an absolute majority of the Member States in the United Nations.

My delegation has always believed that the expansion of the Security Council should incorporate the full range of interests and points of view, rather than be designed to accommodate the needs and privileges of some select groups of countries. For these reasons, the

enlargement and composition of the Council must reflect the universal character of the United Nations and must be guided by the principle of sovereign equality of States and equitable geographical distribution.

In this regard, some concepts advocating the creation of regional or semi-permanent membership have been introduced. In the past, my delegation has expressed its interest in the proposals based on these concepts. We remain interested in these proposals, in the belief that the creation of such a membership would be beneficial to both small and medium-sized countries.

Fourthly, another equally important aspect that we should focus on in the reform exercise relates to the decision-making procedures of the Council. We have always questioned the continuing relevance of the veto in the light of the changed realities of today's world.

The veto system is incompatible with the principles of democracy and sovereign equality. While it is true that the veto has rarely been used in recent times, there are no assurances that it will not be used again. Moreover, the international community is aware of many instances in which the threat to use the veto, or even the possession of that power, influenced the deliberations and decisions of the Council.

As it stands, however, none of the permanent members is willing to accept the abolition of the veto. Under the circumstances, we share the view of those delegations that advocate a realistic approach based upon pragmatism. In that regard, we are pleased that many proposals designed to limit the veto power in its scope and use have already been tabled, and we believe that the Working Group should discuss them in detail and identify the areas where we can take some positive steps.

Fifthly, my delegation strongly opposes the extension of the veto power beyond the five current permanent members. We have in the past repeatedly voiced our strong opposition to such proliferation. The veto is an anachronistic institution that should be discarded eventually — definitely not one that should be extended to other members of the Council.

Sixthly, any reform that results only in an enlargement of membership is not satisfactory to us. Our firm view is that a mere change in the size and composition of the Council — one that is not accompanied by some specific changes in its working methods — would not be sufficient.

In this regard, we are pleased that a broad consensus on the need for a more open and transparent Security Council appears to have emerged from the discussions in the Working Group, and that some limited but important initiatives have already been taken by the Council towards that end, as enumerated in the observations and assessment of the two Vice-Chairmen. However, we believe that much more can be done, even without waiting for the finalization of the reform package, given that in most cases an amendment to the Charter is not required. We urge the Council to respond further to the aspirations of the majority of the Member States to increased transparency in its working methods.

Finally, I should like to share some of my thoughts on how we might best proceed further in the discussion of the subject before us.

We believe that the Member States should strive hard to keep the momentum alive and further facilitate the process, so that a reform package acceptable to all Member States could emerge at an early stage.

In closing, I should like to reiterate the Republic of Korea's firm commitment to participate actively, with an open mind and a constructive spirit, in the deliberations of the Working Group and to fully cooperate with other delegations to achieve consensus.

Mr. Pawar (India): Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Diogo do Freitas Amaral on his election as President of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. My delegation has no doubt that the work of the Assembly will proceed smoothly and productively under his expert guidance.

At the recent Summit in Cartagena of the Non-Aligned Movement many important decisions were taken by its Heads of State and Government in regard to the expansion and reform of the Security Council, which will provide a beneficial input for the work of the Open-ended Working Group in the coming year. The statement of the Ambassador of Colombia in this regard, giving the details, has the full support of my delegation.

The report of the Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council has a wealth of documentation annexed to it. This compendium shows that in the past two years of extensive discussions we have witnessed a rich exchange of ideas and views that gives us a clear insight into the thinking of the Member

States. Notably, there are both areas of convergence and areas of differences on a number of questions related to the main issue. However, it is significant that a consensus exists for an expansion of the Security Council that would reflect the increase in the membership of the United Nations, especially of developing countries. This is necessary to ensure the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness.

My delegation supports the continuation of the work of the Working Group on the basis of this important consensus decision. We hope that the Group will attempt, in its further work, to narrow the differences that exist and to make sustained efforts to reach a consensus on unresolved issues.

In this context, I should like to quote here from the statement made by our Prime Minister before this Assembly on the occasion of the Special Commemorative Meeting to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

> "The United Nations today includes a much larger number of independent, sovereign States than when it began. In such a context, the United Nations cannot afford to be seen as either exclusivist or incomplete, either in appearance or in outlook. In particular, an adequate presence of developing countries is needed in the Security Council on the basis of objective criteria: nations of the world must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity are factored into United Nations decision-making". (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 40th meeting, p. 45*)

The existing imbalances in the membership of the Security Council arise from the exclusion from representation of an overwhelming segment of the world population: that residing in the developing countries. Any proposal that accentuates this imbalance obviously will not enjoy consensus. As has been made clear in the Cartagena Declaration of the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, any attempt to exclude non-aligned countries from any expansion in membership of the Security Council, including permanent membership, would be unacceptable to the Movement.

We believe that the expansion of the membership of the Council in the category of permanent members should be decided upon on the basis of agreed criteria for selection. Once criteria are agreed upon, the decision on new permanent members should be made globally by the membership of the United Nations. We have, in the course of the deliberations of the Working Group, suggested certain criteria, such as population, contribution to the United Nations system, support and participation in peace-keeping, and potential for a regional and global role. Other criteria have been mentioned by other countries. We believe that it would be beneficial for the Group to analyse these suggestions and come up with an acceptable set of criteria against which the claims of each country could be assessed. On the basis of such criteria, some countries will clearly qualify for permanent membership. We believe that India will be among them.

As we have stated on several occasions, the expansion of the Council and its reform should be considered as integral parts of a common package, taking into account the need for transparency in the decision-making process. We welcome the Working Group's decision that the final agreement on cluster I and cluster II issues should comprise a comprehensive package.

Before concluding, I wish to assure the Assembly that India will continue to participate actively and in a constructive manner in the discussions within the Working Group in a constructive manner.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): For the third consecutive time, the General Assembly is discussing the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Last year, we spoke before the General Assembly and expressed our thanks to the Chairman of the informal Working Group and to both Vice-Chairmen for their outstanding work during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Today I shall take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the informal Working Group during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Foreign Minister Essy, and the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Breitenstein and Ambassador Pibulsonggram, for their excellent work. In particular, I would like to express my thanks to the two Vice-Chairmen for their accurate assessment of the progress achieved by the informal Working Group and for the proposals set forth in their report, which has been circulated as an official document.

We regret that Ambassador Pibulsonggram will be leaving. Let me use this opportunity to thank him again for his untiring efforts to guide and conduct the work of the Group. We hope that a successor can be found as soon as possible. Like the great majority of Member

States, we are opposed to further changes in the Bureau of the Working Group because this cannot but affect the work of all working groups. I am sure we all have the greatest interest in progress being made in the Working Group on an Agenda for Development as well as in the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.

I see our task of restructuring the Security Council as comparable to the renovation of a huge house whose roof has suffered damage from storms. Therefore, the attic and roof must be rebuilt and strengthened to once again be able to cope with bad weather to come. During the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly we answered the questions of why we thought it necessary to rebuild the attic and what kind of reconstruction we had in mind. During the last session — the forty-ninth session — of the General Assembly, we consulted several architects and weighed the pros and cons of their proposals. Now, during the fiftieth session, the anniversary session of the General Assembly, we have to take the third step and select the proposal which is the most adequate and suitable. This decision will not be an easy one. But I am convinced that we will be successful. I am optimistic for three reasons.

First, we have no time to lose. We will not be able to meet the challenges facing our Organization unless the United Nations house has a repaired and stable roof and attic. Any damage to the roof affects the house as a whole. Those who have carefully followed the general debate of this session of the General Assembly and the statements made during the fiftieth-anniversary celebration know that there continues to be consensus about the urgent need to reform.

Secondly, we know what we are aiming at in rebuilding the attic. We want an attic which is easily accessible and which has many means of access to the other floors. In other words, the Member States should have the opportunity to be represented on the Council more frequently. We want the attic to be large in all four directions. This also applies to those who live on this floor. No one shall be excluded. In other words, all world regions should be equitably represented on the Council. In particular, the regions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean States need stronger representation. We do not favour an undemocratic architectural plan for the enlargement of the Council which excludes States or groups of States from the outset.

We want to ensure the upkeep of the attic. The attic of a house suffers particularly from strong weather and storms. It needs experienced inhabitants who have reliable equipment and special tools to maintain it. In other words, countries that are able and willing to contribute on a global scale to the maintenance of peace and security and that have already taken on large responsibilities regarding international development and United Nations activities should be permanently represented on the Council. We, and with us a large number of other Member States, believe that Germany is one of these countries. The attic should not be closed off or have an impervious concrete floor. I have spoken already of the need for many means of access. It must be bright and have skylights. In other words, the Council's work must be carried out in an open and transparent manner to enable non-members to receive all the information they require. Some progress has already been achieved in this context. During the German presidency of the Council we tried to live up to this task. Nevertheless, much still needs to be done.

There is no space left in the house for additional floors, special ante-rooms or special entries. We are not aiming at a completely new architecture with new classes of inhabitants. We prefer a thorough renovation of the house that we know and cherish. In other words, models of rotation, which received the support during the recent general debate of less than 3 per cent of Member States, are no alternative or, at best, a bad one and would create more problems than they could solve.

Thirdly, we have now a more than sufficient number of recommendations, opinions and reports on the rebuilding. On the part of the United Nations there are the report of the informal Working Group and the observations and the assessment by the Vice-Chairmen of the progress of its work. I congratulate the Vice-Chairmen on their judicious observations regarding the important progress made. I associate myself fully with their suggestions and their belief that Member States must aim at substantial achievements during the current, fiftieth, session of the General Assembly.

Two other important United Nations documents, both issued on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, lend momentum to the reform of the Council: The Declaration of the Member States and Observers of 24 October 1995, representing the peoples of the world, and the statement of the Security Council adopted at its meeting at ministerial level under the Italian presidency on 26 September 1995. Both documents call for the reform of the Council.

From the Member States themselves we have the statements made during the recent general debate and the anniversary meeting. The statements show a clear tendency in favour of enlarging the Council. The parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the special session of the Inter-Parliamentary Council in New York marking the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, adopted a declaration entitled "A Parliamentary Vision for International Cooperation into the Twenty-First Century". This declaration calls for a reform of the Security Council to make it more representative while at the same time maintaining its authority and effectiveness.

Some important and well-recognized groups of States have issued joint statements. I would like to mention, among others, the non-aligned countries at their recent Summit, the Nordic States and the informal group of small and medium-sized countries. In a solemn declaration on the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, the European Council, at its summit meeting in Cannes last June, unanimously called on the United Nations and its Member States to pursue and develop the reform programme under way and to make further progress in adapting United Nations structures and institutions, including the Security Council, to present circumstances.

Finally, several comprehensive studies on reform questions have been published by independent experts this year. As one example of many I may mention the Qureshi-von Weizsäcker report, which deals explicitly with reform of the Council. We must make good use of the momentum created. It will not last forever. Let us take advantage of the window of opportunity that is now open.

We agree with the observation, made by the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group and by numerous other States, that the time has come to move on to the next phase of the work — that is, to a process of actual negotiations aimed at achieving a single, comprehensive agreement. The decisive question that we shall have to answer is this: will the future composition of the Council benefit the Organization and the international community of States? So far as my country and its readiness to serve the United Nations as a permanent member of the Security Council are concerned, I am not afraid of the answer to this question. The United Nations can count on Germany.

The Acting President: We shall continue our consideration of item 47 this afternoon, starting at 3 o'clock. As was announced earlier, some 70 delegations are listed to take part in the debate on this item. As we have heard only nine at this meeting, I again appeal for brevity. Delegations are requested to ensure, if at all possible, that statements do not exceed 10 minutes.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.